

VIRGINIA ARGUS.

[XVITH YEAR.]

A FREE PRESS MAINTAINS THE SOVEREIGNTY OF THE PEOPLE.

[No. 1569]

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TUESDAY, JULY 19, 1808.

[12 1-2 Cents Single.]

Richmond Price Current.

(CORRECTED WEEKLY.)

Tobacco, -	\$ 4 00	CASH
1 st HAY, new, red 75, white 83	do.	
Flour, superfine, new, -	5 00	do.
Flour, fine, -	4 50	do.
Corn, -	2 75	do.
Hemp, clean, (per ton)	180 00	do.
Bacon, -	110 00	do.
Wheat, -	41	do.
Whiskey, -	42	do.

The subjoined number of "One of the People," presents in a limited space, a faithful biography of Mr. Madison, and with all the vivacity of eloquence, and the power of truth, flings the minority into merited contempt. They have endeavored, with microscopic sight, to find some dark spots upon his character—but the blaze of virtue is too dazzling for their vision, and they only look to be confounded. If there are any, whose suspicions are worth remarking, we invite them to the study and remembrance of the following strong and animated sketch. The various charges which ingenuity has invented, and which malice has trumpeted to the world, are completely proved to be *non-interferentia*. When the minority first gave the *whooop* of disaffection, and slandered about *back stair influence*, federalism rose from its exhausted state—*hope elevated*, and *joy brightened its crest*. Those very men who had been the objects of their deepest execration, moved like deities to their *enlured eyes*. They have joined in the bitterest denunciation against Mr. Madison, and strange to tell, because they pretend to believe him a federalist! Inconsistency, thy name is federalism! "Thus (in the words of Burke) are blown away this insect race! Thus perish the miserable inventions of the wretched runners, for a wretched cause, which they have flown into every weak and rotten part of the country, in vain hopes, that where their maggots had taken wing, their importunate buzzing might sound something like the public voice." *Argus.*

To Messrs. Joseph Clay, Abraham Trigg, John Russell, Josiah Masters, Geo. Clinton, Jr. Gordon S. Mumford, John Thompson, Peter Smart, Edwin Gray, W. Hope, Samuel Smith, Daniel Montgomery, John Harris, Samuel Maclay, David R. Williams, James M. Garnett and John Randolph, members of Congress.

GENTLEMEN,

We believe that you would willingly dispense with any further attentions to your PROTEST. You would not care how soon it sun^d into the bottomless ocean of oblivion. And if we could regard it as the work of indiscretion and unreflecting haste, for which, in a calmer moment, you would yourselves feel a generous sorrow and contrition, we would permit it to sink forever. But, since it is the offspring of deliberation and design, a sample of your characters, in your wisest and most virtuous moments, it shall not sink. We will keep it buoyant, until you shall perceive and feel how thoroughly we have dissected and anatomized you, how perfectly we understand you: until you shall stand abashed and confounded at the broad and open detection of your own weakness and wickedness; and over the grave of your ruined reputations, ruined by your own misdeeds, pour from self love, those groans of remorse and repentance, which in you, we fear, can never rise from a more generous source.

You object to Mr. Madison, *the want of energy*. The objection shows the company which you have been keeping. It proves that confederacy with your former political adversaries, which has been so often, and, we now find so justly charged upon you.—It is the mere echo of the old federal reproach against Mr. Jefferson, caught by you to be reverberated against his expected successor. *The want of energy?* How has Mr. Madison shewn it? Was it in standing a-breast with the van of our revolutionary patriots, and braving the horrors of a seven years war, for liberty—while you were shuddering at the sound of the storm and clinging closer with terror, to your mothers' breasts? Was it in the declaration of our independence, in being among the first and most effective agents, in casting aside the feeble threads which so poorly connected the states together, and in lieu of them substituting that energetic bond of union, the federal constitution? Was it in the manner in which he advocated the adoption of this substitute—in the courage and firmness with which he met on this topic, fought, hand to hand, and finally vanquished that boasted prodigy of nature, Patrick Henry? Where was this timid and apprehensive spirit which you are pleased to ascribe to Mr. Madison, when he sat under the sound of Henry's voice for days and weeks together—when

he saw that Henry, whose soul had so undauntedly led the revolution, shrinking back from this bold experiment, from the energy of this new and untried constitution—when he heard the magic of his eloquence exerted to its highest pitch, in painting, with a prophet's fire, the oppressions which would flow from it: in harrowing up the soul with anticipated horrors and enlisting even the thunders of Heaven in his cause? How did it happen that the feeble and effeminate spirit of James Madison, instead of flying in confusion and dismay, before this awful and tremendous combination, sat serene and unmoved upon its throne; that with a penetration so vigorous and so clear, he dissipated these phantoms of fancy; rallied back the courage of the house to the charge, and, in a state, in which Patrick Henry was almost adored as infallible, succeeded in throwing that Henry into a minority? Is this the proof of his want of energy? Or will you find it in the manner, in which he watched the first movements of the federal constitution—in the boldness with which he resisted, even in a Washington, what he deemed infractions of its spirit—in the independence, ability and vigor with which, in spite of declining health, he maintained this conflict during eight years? He was then in a minority. Turn to the debates of congress and read his arguments: You will see how the business of a virtuous and able minority is conducted. Do you discover in them any evidence of want of energy? Yes—if energy consist, as you seem to think it does, in saying rude things, in bravado and bluster, in pouring a muddy torrent of coarse invective, as destitute of argument, as unwarranted by protection, you will find great evidence of want of energy in his speeches. But if true energy be evinced, as we think it is, by the calm and dignified, yet steady, zealous and persevering pursuit of an object, his whole conduct during that period is honourably marked with energy.—And that energy rested on the most solid and durable basis—conscious rectitude; supported by the most profound and extensive information, by an habitual power of investigation which unravelled with intuitive certainty, the most intricate subjects, and an eloquence, chaste, luminous and cogent, which won respect, while it forced conviction. We have compared some of your highest and most vaunted displays, with the speeches of Mr. Madison, during his services in congress. Great God! what a contrast! It is the noisy and short-lived babbling of a brook after a rain, compared with the majestic course of the Potomac. Yet you have the vanity and hardihood to ask for the proofs of his talents! You, who have as yet shown no talents that can be of service to your country; no talent beyond those of the merciless T-ian, who dexterously strikes a tomahawk into the defenceless heart!—But what an idea is yours of energy! You feel a constitutional irritability—you indulge it and you call that *indulgent energy*. Sudden fits of spleen—transient starts of passion—wild paroxysms of fury—the more slow and secret workings of envy and resentment—cruel taunts and sarcasms—the dreams of disordered fancy—the crude abortions of short-sighted theory—the delirium and ravings of a hectic fever—this is your notion of ENERGY! Heaven preserve our country from such energy as this: If this be the kind of energy which you deny to Mr. Madison, the people of this country will concur in your denial. But if you deny him that salutary energy which qualifies him to pursue his country's happiness and to defend her rights, we follow up the course of his public life and demand the proof of your charge; for we beg you not to think so highly of yourselves, nor so meanly of us, as to suppose that *your general assertion* will pass with us for *proofs*: we have not yet seen the evidence of candour and virtue which entitles you to this high ground.—To your *proofs*, then, and to the retrospect of his life. Do you remember that dark and disastrous period during the administration of General Washington, when the British marine was taking some of those stately strides, which threatened to crush our infant commerce in the bud? do you remember the resolutions brought forward by Mr. Madison at that period, to restrict the British commerce itself, and avenge the wrongs done to his country? Do you remember those celebrated resolutions, and the raptures of applause with which they were received by the people for their well-timed and well directed energy? It may be convenient to you not to remember these things. But do not believe that we shall forget them; nor that we shall fail to compare the spirited & highly applauded policy which he recommended, then, with the policy which our present wise & virtuous republican minority, are recommending toward the same nation now, on account of the same kind of aggressions. Yes, gentlemen, we mark the energy of your policy towards Great Britain—the policy by which you, in conjunction with your ally and associate the honorable Timothy Pickering, (the force of whose logic you just begin to feel) recommend it to this independent and gallant nation to cower down before the lawless and arrogant pretensions of that bloated and blustering bully of the ocean. This dastardly truckling to Great Britain, is what you call *energy*; the attitude which Mr. Madison took towards her in '95, was *imbecility*. Blush at the imbecility of your own intellects, which could plunge you into this ridiculous and shameful dilemma.

Again, was Mr. Madison's want of energy shewn in the year 1799? In that year, the political hemisphere was so far

from having "brightened a little," that it darkness had thickened until it could be felt. The Alien and Sedition laws waved their baleful sceptres over the continent, and the bosoms of patriots were every where, filled with consternation, and, almost, with despair. It was believed that public liberty had no hope, no refuge but in the state governments. It had been announced: from the presidential chair, that there was a party in Virginia which was to be "ground into dust and ashes."—The resolutions of Co. Taylor in 1798, treated with neglect or contempt by the other great states, had proved that the legislature of Virginia was the last stand of our political freedom and happiness: And to crown the climax of danger and disconsolation, the distinguished, Patrick Henry came again from retirement, with the view, as it was understood, to assault and dislodge them from this their last station. Such was the inauspicious, the all-important, the decisive crisis, when James Madison, with a frame still languishing under sickness, but with a spirit firm, erect and intrepid, came forth in the cause of liberty and his country. Who can forget that moment? Who can forget how the little band of Virginian Patriots crowded around this republican champion to catch the accents of a voice rendered feeble by disease?—Even yet we have this virtuous and fraternal group before us. Who can forget how the night of despair first began to give way—how hope, at first, faintly dawned upon each cheek, as uncertain of her footing; until under the inspiring strains of his voice, she assumed a deep and determined glow and sparkled with exultation in every eye.—Who can forget the resplendent triumph of truth and reason exhibited in his report? Who that loves his country can cease to love the man, whose genius and firmness gained that triumph?—Not the American people, be assured, gentlemen.—Yet we find that one of you, under the signature of Falkland, in a late Enquirer, can recall that epoch with far different emotions; exclaiming his spleen by fancying what would have been the result of a *renewal* between Mr. Henry and Mr. Madison, if it had not been prevented by the death of the former—how the genius of Madison would have sunk and fled before the impetuous and over-whelming eloquence of Mr. Henry. The writer obviously derives a species of malignant pleasure from brooding over this imaginary triumph, although it gained, it would have been at the expense of his country. This is his virtue: this too is his candor! Had he forgotten the convention of Virginia, where Henry, in all his glory, was foiled by the transcendent powers of James Madison? Or did he think the defence of the Alien and Sedition laws a better cause, than the contending for previous amendments to the constitution? Wretched, most wretched is the fate of that writer—or that man who deserts the plain high-way of candour, of candor, for the dark and crooked mazes of intrigue and cunning—of trick and misrepresentation: He may, as the wise son of Sirach has said, "work his way, for a time, like a mole under ground, but, by and bye, he blunders into light and stands exposed with all his dirt upon his head."

We have taken a rapid review of the life of Mr. Madison, for the purpose of finding the occasion on which he betrayed this want of energy. We cannot find it. On the contrary, in every crisis, during his long and eventful political career, of four and thirty years, whenever the energy of the statesman was demanded, we have seen it illustriously displayed by him: not the spasms of a madman—but the steady and unremitting energy of a firm and ardent patriot, a man of the purest and most disinterested heart, and of endowments of the very first and highest order. We have not followed Mr. Madison into his office under the present administration; because since that time, his course has been uniformly with the administration; and whatever you may think of that course, the seal of approbation has been already fixed upon it by your country.

No more then of your harping on this general charge of want of energy: descend to a specification, and shew us when & where it was. We beg your pardon: you have specified the solitary ground of this heavy charge—Mr. Madison, it seems, left his post in Congress, in the moment of danger, and took refuge in retirement. This is just as candid as the rest of your reproaches. The case was this. Mr. Madison had devoted two and twenty years of the prime and flower of his life to the service of his country: he had not spent those years in saying "yea" and "nay," nor, what is worse, in venting barbarous sarcasms, in writing protests, disgraceful in playing the part of Thersites in the camp of Agamemnon: No; those years had been spent in beneficial services, in the discharge of the most arduous duties, in the most intense and unrelaxing exertion of his pre-eminent faculties in the cause of liberty and republican government. In

the mean time, his private affairs had been neglected—his constitution had received a serious shock—his health was in a visible and alarming decline. In these circumstances, at the close of general Washington's administration, he sought an interval to put his estate in order, to recruit his health if that were possible, or, if otherwise, to provide for the awful change which he had too much reason to apprehend. It was in 1797 and '98 that he was thus engaged. But we have seen, that in 1799 when the dangers of his country had increased almost to desperation, although his health was so far from being confirmed, that it had become worse, he again made his appearance on the political theatre, with the same signal gallantry, which had ever distinguished him. He has been in public life ever since.—And those two years of repose and of private duty, so reasonable, so necessary to him, are what you would have us to consider as a cowardly flight from danger! We are not Barbarians. You defeat your own purpose, gentlemen; you wish to destroy Mr. Madison; but you force us to recall his services and to reflect how immaculate must be that life, against which malice itself can bring no better charges.

So much for your accusation of the want of energy, and for the single instance by which you attempt to support it. But after all, this is, perhaps, a mere dispute about a word: it is probable, that we do not attach the same idea to the term *energy*. What our idea of the energy of a republican patriot is, we have already shewn in the example of Mr. Madison. As to any thing farther, we admit, most cheerfully admit, that Mr. Madison has not that kind of energy which distinguished a Cæsar, a Clodius or a Caesar, a Danton, a Robespierre or a Napoleon.—We hope that he has no ambition to figure at the spring of a guillotine, at the head of a faction, nor of an army, red with civil blood, and infamously immortal by the overthrow of its country's liberty.—This may be the species of energy which suits your projects. But where will you find it? Not in Mr. Madison, most assuredly; and as assuredly, not in either of the noble minded and honorable gentlemen, who are understood to be cursed with the support of your names.

We have done with this charge of the want of energy. Those who choose to take the floating rumor, and through indolence or credulity to found their faith upon it, without examination, may have been gulled by the din which you have raised. They are however but a few.—The people, who choose to take nothing on credit, but to examine for themselves, are not thus to be duped. We have examined this charge and we have found it air.

But let us see how well this quadrates with your next charge. This is, that Mr. Madison in conjunction with Mr. Jay and Mr. Hamilton, wrote the work called *The Federalist*, in which the most objectionable doctrines of the latter are maintained. Now the objection to the doctrines of the latter gentleman were, that they were *too energetic*. In one breath, then, Mr. Madison wants energy—in the next he has too much of it. This is the unity and consistency of truth. But why, again, are you so vague and so general in this charge about the Federalist. Our jurists tell us "*dolus latet in generalibus*"—deception lurks in general expressions? and the truth of the maxim was never more strikingly exemplified than in your treatment of Mr. Madison. You mount some eminence, and with a trumpet to your mouth, you bawl out "Yazoo," "want of energy," "The Federalist—Jay and Hamilton." It does not suit you to descend to particulars, because you know the charges require but to be seriously examined, and they are at once falsified and exposed. You know the odium attached to the words which you utter, and regarding your countrymen as a pack from the kennel, you seem to think that you have nothing to do, but to point out the game and set us on. But we are not quite such beasts as you are pleased, most respectfully to consider us. Instead of being ready to worry a patriot whose virtues offend you, we will protect and cherish him against your injustice and most undeserved persecution. The Federalist? We know that it is a defence of the constitution, which we are all sworn to support: and where is the crime of Mr. Madison's having participated in that defence? Is it criminal in Mr. Madison to have defended the constitution by written argument, and yet not criminal in you and in us to have sworn to support it? This is another evolution of the strength and clearness of your discernment! Since you will not descend to particularize the passages in the Federalist which Mr. Madison wrote and which give you offence, permit us to extract one which is calculated to give you consolation in the prospect before you, since it promises the continuance of your honorable existence as a body:—"Liberty is to faction, what air is to fire; an aliment,

without which it instantly expires. But it could not be a less folly to abolish liberty, which is essential to political life, because it nourishes faction, than it would be to wish the annihilation of air which is essential to animal life, because it imparts to fire its destructive agency." This is a general answer to a general charge. When you give that charge a definite form, it shall receive a definite answer.

But you wish for your president "a man not suspected of undue partiality or enmity to either of the present belligerent powers." Suspected? And by whom is Mr. Madison thus suspected? Not by the people: for they have seen no act of his in relation to those powers, except in concert with the administration, which they entirely approve. By whom then is he thus suspected? By your honorable selves. And why do you suspect him? Because you suspect the administration of which he is an officer. Yes; this insinuation is merely a continuance of that war which you have been for some time carrying on against Mr. Jefferson. It seems to be one of the articles of the treaty of amity which you have lately formed with the honorable Timothy Pickering, and his associates, to *hark in and j* in the old federal cry of *French influence* in our councils.—The time was when you repelled this atrocious and unfounded calumny, as it became men. But that day is over; & with it, your standing & influence in this country. "Alas! how fallen!" We pity you; but our confidence in you is gone forever. Where your tergiversation will end, we cannot calculate. The shades of discrimination between yourselves and the federalists cannot now be distinguished.

Your republican blue has melted into the federal red. And since the honorable Timothy seems to have come forward with the view of convincing us that New England is not quite such a blank in point of talents as she seems to have been supposed, that there is a man there capable of the highest offices, and who already fancies that he has a distant scent of Presidential honors, we should not be surprised if your next plunge were to support him for that office. He seems already to have convinced you that our seamen and our commerce ought to be sacrificed to British insolence; the transition is easy to the next absurdity, that he is fit for our President. What glorious times we shall have then! Our illustrious President will not be at all suspected of undue partiality to either of those European powers. He may indeed acknowledge the British supremacy upon the ocean, strike to her flag in every sea, surrender our citizens to her impressment, our commerce to her rapacity, and, sooner than incommode her by an embargo, carry his edicts to the coast of China—but what of all this? It is for the good of the British navy; "that navy is our shield"—and tho' that shield may bruise or break the arm which it affects to cover—still it is a shield and a cover—and what is more—it is the British navy and the adversary of France! Such is the new policy which you seem to have learned! Such your idea of impartiality between the Belligerents!—We will suffer the aggressions of neither with impunity; and although we have not a navy to cope with them, we have the means of making them feel our displeasure; and they shall feel it equally and severely.—We will sacrifice to the arrogance neither of the one nor the other. This is our creed and the creed of the administration.

We have done with your charges against Mr. Madison. Would to Heaven it were in your power to remove as easily those which you have drawn upon your own heads!—But before we take our leave of you, it will be proper to notice the sentiment with which you close your protest. You have given a new attitude and a new face to the republican idea of retaliation in office. The advantage of this principle, as you understand it, is that the successor may impartially review the acts of the past administration, adopt those which tend to promote the public good and abandon those of a contrary tendency. And whence are we to get this successor, whom you suppose so ignorant of the acts of his predecessors, that immediately upon his election he is gravely to sit down to review them and to examine their tendency for the first time, to cull from among them the beneficial acts, in order that he may adopt them, and to reject those which he thinks ought not to be adopted. Are you men who write thus; or are you children? We had thought that the acts of the administration were examined as they went along; their wisdom and tendency decided upon by the opinion of the nation; and that no man would be called to the presidential chair, so ignorant of past events, as to have to learn them by rummaging over the journals of his predecessors. But this is another specimen of your shuffling. There is obviously an effort to keep back a part of your wishes. Speak out, gentlemen; after the lengths which you have gone, it is the height of folly to be squeamish. Or if you will not speak out, we will do it for you. This is your